

HB 492 -- REGIONAL JAIL DISTRICTS

SPONSOR: Van Schoiack

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Corrections and Public Institutions by a vote of 11 to 1.

This bill requires a county wanting to join an existing regional jail district that already levies a sales tax to first obtain approval from its voters to levy that sales tax.

The bill adds equipping and maintaining jail facilities and leasing jail properties to the powers authorized to a jail district.

Commissioners must serve until their successors in their county offices have assumed office.

This bill increases the maximum authorized sales tax used to fund a regional jail district to 1% of retail sales made in the region.

The bill repeals the 12 month required interval between votes for voting on the jail district levy and joining the jail district.

Expenditures from the tax levy of the regional jail district are expanded to include any of the district's authorized purposes.

The expiration date of September 30, 2028, for regional jail districts is repealed.

This bill allows regional jail districts to buy, lease, or sell personal property for authorized purposes.

Regional jail districts are authorized to contract with governmental entities, including departments and their instrumentalities, and private entities to house prisoners.

This bill contains an emergency clause.

This bill is the same as HB 1612 (2024).

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that a new jail is needed, and an increased sales tax is needed to pay for that jail. These regional jail districts need the ability to maintain their facilities. The current jail is not secure and has nearly outlived its lifespan. The regional jail district allows flexibility for projects that some counties could not handle on their own. New jails can cost tens of millions of dollars, so pooling resources can be a great solution to reduce the burden on the taxpayer.

Testifying in person for the bill were Representative Van Schoiack; Missouri Association of Counties; LJ Hart and Company.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

Written testimony has been submitted for this bill. The full written testimony and witnesses testifying online can be found under Testimony on the bill page on the House website.